

thrown on the portrait of the Virgin Mary. That is where they decide they should draw the line. They want that to be continued to be funded by taxpayer dollars.

Mayor Giuliani comes out and says this is offensive. Of course it is offensive. I wonder what the black community would do if Martin Luther King's portrait was there and had crap thrown on it. I wonder what those of us who are concerned about AIDS in this country would do if they put an AIDS blanket on there and threw crap on it.

Of course it is offensive. Those communities would not tolerate it. They would probably take down the building. But I guess it is okay for the arts community in New York City, or at least the leadership of the prima donnas, to say it is all right to offend the Catholic religion and to offend Christians throughout the country.

Let me tell you, the Jewish community could be next. For all I know, this museum might put on the swastika and say it is beautiful art and should be paid for by the taxpayer dollars.

I am urging the art community, Mayor Giuliani is right in this case, and you know he is right. Those are taxpayer dollars. Do not offend the taxpayer, do not offend religions across this world, by allowing the Virgin Mary display in your museum at taxpayer expense.

You have plenty of patrons, plenty of rich patrons that support the arts community. Go to your patrons and say look, will you fund this offensive display? By the way, I would be surprised if you have many that do. But will you fund this display of the Virgin Mary with crap thrown all over it? Will you fund it somewhere else, so we do not have to go to the taxpayer?

It is amazing to me. Even the New York Times ran an editorial today, and they say what a courageous stand this art museum is taking by standing up and saying we have the right at taxpayers' expense to display a portrait of the Virgin Mary with crap thrown on it.

I wonder where the New York Times would be if that was an AIDS blanket. I wonder where the New York Times would be if that was a portrait of Martin Luther King or a symbol of the Jewish religion.

It is amazing to me that the art community defies common sense every opportunity they seem to have. I am telling you in New York City and my colleagues that represent New York City, let me tell you, you are hurting the arts community across the United States.

One other point I want to make, if you do think in New York City that this art and that what you have done here does not extend across the country, I am getting calls in my district, the 3rd Congressional District of Colorado. That is the mountains. It is a

long ways away from New York City. But I have got constituents, rightfully so, very, very upset about the fact that you in New York City in that arts community, the prima donnas, are funding with taxpayer dollars that picture, that portrait of the Virgin Mary with dung thrown on it, and stand up and have the gall to defend it.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. McINNIS. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Recently we have, of course, seen a terrible situation where young Christians were murdered and attacked by someone down in Texas. Does the gentleman believe that perhaps some of this vitriol he is talking about could have resulted in that type of violence against Christians? We will leave that for the public.

REFINEMENTS TO THE BALANCED BUDGET ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in frustration, frustration with the government agency that may even be more unpopular than the IRS, if you can believe it. My friends on the Health Subcommittee of Ways and Means and many other colleagues on both sides of the aisle know exactly who I am talking about, the Healthcare Financing Administration, or HCFA.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday of this week our Health Subcommittee will be holding a hearing on refinements to the Balanced Budget Amendment, or BBA. As we plan for this hearing, I hope the administration will not appear before us again in the subcommittee and insult our intelligence. I will be asking some tough questions about their handling of the Medicare program recently, and I hope I do not hear that the agency is unable to address the concerns we are hearing about from seniors across the Nation, and also from Medicare providers, because the agency's hands are completely tied by prescriptive BBA language. That is the constant refrain we get from HCFA, the agency's hands are completely tied by prescriptive BBA language.

We hear these lines about prescriptive language and Congressional intent when the administration does not want to do things, but when it does want to act, when it does want to do something, it is perfectly comfortable with ignoring bill language or Congressional intent.

Some of the problems we are hearing about in Medicare from health care providers are all results of actual BBA language. Yes, they are. The Health Subcommittee is planning to provide relief in those areas. But, as Senator ROTH and Chairman THOMAS have said

recently, there is also a lot HCFA can do.

The BBA gives HCFA significant power over how things are implemented. The risk adjuster for Medicare+Choice payments is a perfect example. Many of my colleagues and I have heard concerns about the risk adjuster the administration has designed. One very important concern is how this risk adjuster will impact some very special programs, especially innovative programs that seniors want and that the frail elderly seniors need so desperately.

HCFA obviously understands the grave impact the interim risk adjuster will have on these programs. In fact, HCFA exempted them from the risk adjuster for the first year. But the argument which compelled the agency to exempt them for one year remains the same and just as powerful for all the years under the interim risk adjuster.

Now, I might be just a plain Norwegian from Lake Woebegone, Mr. Speaker, but even I cannot understand why the agency is not exempting them for the entire interim period. That just makes good common Governor Jessie Ventura sense. If they have the authority to do it for 1 year, it seems they have the authority to do it for multiple years. Conversely, if they do not have authority for all the years, then how do they have the authority to do it for one?

I see nothing in the BBA which prohibits the agency from exempting them for more than 1 year. Even if I were to accept HCFA's claim that only Congressional action allows a multiple-year exemption, that still would not allow me to understand why HCFA is not supporting the bill I introduced to provide the multiple exemption. They tell providers, well, we need Congress to pass a bill. So I introduced one. Then they come up with the multiple weak arguments against the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I am offering to address any substantive concerns in a reasonable way, in a reasonable common-sense way, and I hope we will be having such an exchange on Friday in the Health Subcommittee. I invite the administration to join me for the sake of frail, eligible, elderly beneficiaries in Minnesota and across this Nation.

UNITED STATES-CHINA MILITARY EXCHANGES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, 2 days ago, the U.S. Secretary of Defense, William Cohen, told reporters that he hopes the U.S. military will resume contacts with the Communist Chinese military. At the very same time that Secretary Cohen was speaking, in Shanghai, Chinese dictator

Jiang Zemin was speaking to a gathering of elite U.S. corporate chairmen who were in China to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the communist takeover of the mainland of China.

Jiang Zemin blatantly renewed threats by the communist regime to conquer Taiwan by force, and then he threatened the United States. "We will not allow any foreign force to create or support Taiwanese independence."

I have in my possession, Mr. Chairman, Pentagon documents detailing the Clinton Administration's exchange program between the United States and Communist China. It is a military exchange program. This program of military exchanges has, in effect, assisted the Communist Chinese Air Force in improving its capabilities to conduct bombing raids on Taiwan.

The May 1999 Air Force exchange, and this was an exchange in May of 1999, this year, introduced the Communist Chinese, and these are military leaders in the Communist Chinese military, to our most advanced Air Force capabilities. This may eventually cause the death of Americans serving in any U.S. air or naval forces that would attempt to defend Taiwan against communist attack.

This is mind boggling. I pray that those people who are listening to this or reading it in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD or my colleagues will please pay attention. We are talking about training Communist Chinese military people in ways that will result in the death of thousands, if not tens of thousands, of American military personnel. It is outrageous. It is incredible. What can you say? What can we do to draw attention to this absolute outrage?

The Chinese Communist People's Liberation Air Force and government air traffic control delegation visited the United States between May 9 and May 20 of this year. Air traffic control certainly sounds harmless. The Pentagon documents used to brief these Chinese visitors show that they observed or participated in advanced combat Air Force exercises with the U.S. 389th Fighter Squadron at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona. They also observed fighter bomber operations at Edwards Air Force Base test center in California.

At these exercises, they experienced the real or simulated flights of bombing runs and strafing runs by our most sophisticated military aircraft. Especially useful for the Communist Chinese in their potential attack by the Communist Chinese on Taiwan was the briefing they got, and these DOD documents verify this, that they were shown how the military can use civilian airfields to conduct military operations.

What we see by these DOD documents is that our government, our Defense Department, showed the Communist Chinese how we would use our

radar systems for air traffic control of fighter bombers at remote airfields.

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We showed the Communists how to use AWACs in coordinating bombing campaigns. We showed the Communists how we coordinate our AWACS with in-flight refueling for long-range missions.

Mr. Speaker, earlier in this session, when I discovered this military exchange program and made it public, the Congress appealed to the Defense Department and passed legislation to end military exchanges that would benefit the warfighting skills of the Chinese military.

These DOD documents prove that the Pentagon has ignored the will of Congress. Instead, they have not only jeopardized the 24 million people who live on Democratic Taiwan but this administration is in effect teaching the Communist Chinese how to improve their ability to kill America's defenders.

Again, this is bizarre. It is almost surrealistic. I beg my colleagues to pay attention to this. I beg the administration to come to their senses, quit trying to treat the world's worst human rights abuser, a regime that constantly reminds us that they do not believe in anything that America believes in, hates everything America stands for. I beg them to quit trying to call these people our strategic partners and training them how to do their military.

I stand ready to give my colleagues all of these documents upon request.

TRIBUTE TO BRADLEY CURRY, A GREAT AMERICAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. Speaker, in the days ahead we will debate the final actions that we will take on the budget. We have already tried to bring tax relief to the American people, and we in this Congress day in and day out are fortunate enough to be the governors of a great country that is the freest, safest, and richest country in the world.

There are Americans day in and day out, as we cast these debates and cast our votes, who back home are working to pay the taxes that finance this government, volunteering their time in civic activities to make their community better, and day in and day out do the work of this country.

I rise here today for just a moment to join many Americans who will next week in Washington, D.C. pay tribute to a great American, to a great Georgian, and to a personal friend of mine, Mr. Bradley Curry, a great businessman who built a company with his employees and his partners known as Rock-Tenn, a national, if not world leader, in packaging and in box board.

While he did that, he raised a wonderful family, committed his time to civic activities for the best of our community, whether helping to solve the problems of our public hospital, Grady Memorial, work in a voluntary think-tank called Research Atlanta, or join with hundreds of other Atlantans to make a dream come true to bring the Olympic Games, the Centennial Olympic Games, to our city in 1996.

Above all else, Brad Curry is a dedicated American. His partisanship is red, white, and blue. He works for the best of our country and business, the best in mankind in our community and, most importantly of all, for the continuing foundation of our freedom that we enjoy.

So for this moment on this floor, I rise to pay tribute to Bradley Curry, who will retire at the end of this year from the Rock-Tenn Corporation, but will not retire from his tireless efforts on behalf of his city, his State and his country. I ask all in this Congress to join me in paying their highest respects to Bradley Curry of Atlanta, Georgia, upon his retirement from the Rock-Tenn Corporation.

RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, today America is at a crossroads. Our people head into the 21st century having witnessed remarkable events all across the globe. We have seen the rise and we have seen the fall of tyranny, Nazism and Communism, with Americans being instrumental in the destruction of both.

We have seen technological and scientific developments unparalleled in history. America itself is more prosperous than it has been at any time in its existence. The United States is now recognized as the unchallenged superpower in the world.

Mr. Speaker, at the same time that our Nation has seen so many achievements, we must admit that there are some areas where we are not making the progress that we should. Today, Mr. Speaker, I regret to say that in one area where we are losing ground is our treatment of religious believers. We are witnessing a rising level of bigotry against people of faith, especially Christians.

Mr. Speaker, let me talk about some of the most recent examples that I have seen. The first three followed after the tragic shootings in Littleton, Colorado, and Fort Worth, Texas.

After the memorial service for the families and victims of Littleton, Colorado, on May 1, the May 1 issue of the Denver Post editorialized against what it called, "the disenfranchising nature of this memorial service."